

UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

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Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Straws in the Wind - Part 214



From the NY Times: ...In early 2023, Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican, executed what many viewed as a conservative takeover of New College, a struggling state school. With fewer than 1,000 students, the liberal arts college had long been a draw for nonconformists, where grades were verboten and students designed their own classes and majors. It was "a little Club Med" for people who were "all ideologically the same," said Richard Corcoran, the school's new president.

Under a new board and president, and as required by a new state law, the school has installed a curriculum emphasizing the traditional Western canon, with "The Odyssey" serving as a foundational text. It has created new teams for sports like baseball, basketball and beach volleyball and recruited athletes to fill out their rosters. It has hired dozens of new professors, some with conservative backgrounds and a few who are known for their vocal opposition to liberal orthodoxies, like Spencer Klavan, a lecturer at the college last year, and host of the *Young Heretics* podcast, about classical education.

In September, it announced that a statue of Charlie Kirk, the assassinated conservative activist, would be placed on campus. And the college was among the first to say it would sign the Trump administration's Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education, which links preferential access to federal funding to a willingness to adhere to federal policies and demands, and which better known schools have scorned. The school has also shed D.E.I. initiatives and gender studies.

About 20 faculty members and 200 students decamped within the first six months of the makeover, according to the college. Today, the campus culture reflects the new influx of many conservative-leaning professors and students, who are sharing classes with the old guard who tend to be more liberal. The conservative tilt is unusual for colleges with a liberal arts curriculum.

The changes are not about imposing one point of view on education, Mr. Corcoran said, but about creating a place that values debate. But as the college continues to move toward the ideological right, ...longtime [faculty] are reserving judgment...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/28/us/new-college-ron-desantis-florida-conservative.html>.

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Topics

Dodd



The original Business Administration building was what is now Dodd Hall shown above in 1950. Later, what is now the Luskin School building was constructed and became the Graduate School of Management. The Management School later moved to the to the Anderson School complex in the 1990s. Dodd Hall is named after economist and labor relations specialist Paul Dodd, the first director of the Institute of Industrial Relations and later dean of the College.

Source of photo: <https://picturingucla.library.ucla.edu/photos/ark:/21198/z16t6xrb>.

Data Privacy

From the [Washington Post](#):

California just gave its 40 million residents a permanent delete button for a largely covert part of the personal data economy. On New Year's Day, a government website opened to let Californians demand more than 500 intermediaries called data brokers wipe their personal information from the data on sale and regularly repeat those deletions in the future:

<https://privacy.ca.gov/drop/>

This deletion power is available only to California residents, and data brokers don't have to comply until later this year. It's still worth signing up for deletions now if you're in California... So much of your personal information is amassed by so many companies that no individual can control the scope and the potential harm. Empowering yourself against rampant data surveillance requires savvy laws, regulation and enforcement that only governments can undertake.

...Data brokers are hard to avoid. Even in states where people have the legal right to demand companies stop selling or sharing their personal information, you might have to file opt-out requests with hundreds of data brokers. [Past] attempts by some states, including California, to regulate data brokers mostly haven't worked. [But] in 2023, California amended its consumer protection laws with a unique mandate in U.S. data privacy history: a single website where people could order all data brokers operating in the state to delete their personal information in one fell swoop:

<https://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB362/2023>

Advocates who worked for the California measure, known as the Delete Act, are largely thrilled.

"California has the most advanced approach to data brokers of any state," said Matt Schwartz, a policy analyst for Consumer Reports. "The Delete Act is a great example of a law that gives meaningful control back to consumers." ...



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To start using the data broker deletion website, you must verify that you're a California resident through a digital identification service. Then you enter basic information including your name and variations of your name, date of birth, email address and phone number. For simplicity... skip for now the request for more complicated information, such as your phone's unique identification number and your vehicle identification number. Those long strings of digits are one way that data brokers may identify you for targeted advertising or tracking. You can go back later and add or change anything you enter into the broker deletion website, said Tom Kemp, executive director of California's privacy watchdog, the California Privacy Protection Agency. The privacy agency has help resources and dispute resolution if, for example, you have trouble validating that you're a California resident...

Don't expect anything to happen yet. Data brokers have roughly until the middle of September to act on deletion requests. After that, they face daily fines for each unfilled deletion demand. Data brokers also must regularly comb their records to delete new information from people who previously demanded deletion...

If you choose to delete your information from data brokers with the California website, there should be changes that you notice — and others you might not. Kemp said you should notice a reduction in your data shown by "people search" websites that make information such as your address and relatives' names available to anyone. Kemp said you should also notice fewer targeted online ads and unsolicited texts and emails from companies you've never dealt with.

Data broker deletions won't scrub everything. Some personal information is considered public, such as voter registration and property records. Information like that has been digitized and compiled online and is largely exempt from deletion requests, in California and elsewhere...

Full story at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2026/01/02/delete-information-data-brokers-california/>.

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Yours truly went through the process of registering at the new California website. Be prepared for a lengthy and involved process of verifying that you are a California state resident. It is likely to involve a back-and-forth process using your cellphone and email. If your UC email address has tight spam filters that delay getting verification codes, I suggest using your personal email for this process. Your most likely item of verification will be a California driver's license. The process may involve using your cellphone camera to take images of your license on both sides. You may have to use something called login.gov to do the verification which involves setting up an account for using that site. At the end of the entire lengthy process, you will be informed that data deletion will not start until August 1, 2026. The article above says nothing happens until September. What I think that discrepancy means is that in August the state starts sending data deletion requests to the data brokers who, in turn, don't start doing anything until September.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments: 

Labels: [legislature](#), [privacy](#)

Monday, January 5, 2026

The coming state budget squeeze

From [CalMatters](#): Gov. Gavin Newsom opened [2025] with a rosy forecast: Buoyed by \$17 billion more in revenue than previously planned, the state would have a modest surplus... But life turns on a dime. The January wildfires that ripped through Los Angeles forced the state to spend billions in disaster aid and delay tax filings for LA residents. The cost of Medi-Cal, the state-run health insurance program for low-income residents, ballooned to \$6 billion more than anticipated...

California is facing \$6 billion in extra spending next year, including at least \$1.3 billion because the state must now pay more to cover Medi-Cal benefits under Trump's budget bill. The state also stands to lose more housing and homelessness funding from the federal government... The LAO [Legislative Analyst's Office] notes that solving an ongoing structural budget problem requires either finding more sustainable revenue streams, or making serious cuts, or both.

Full story at <https://calmatters.org/politics/2025/12/california-budget-primer/>.

Under the state constitution, Gov. Newsom must propose a budget for 2026-27 sometime this week.



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New Research Costs for 2026

From the [Daily Princetonian](#):

Researchers... who receive federal funding have had a tumultuous year.

[As of January 1, 2026,] they have one more thing to balance: a new

federal public access policy that could cost researchers thousands of

dollars more to publish in academic journals. The new public access

policy, known as the Nelson Memo, was released under the Biden

administration in 2022 and

mandates that any research that is funded by federal agencies be made publicly available at the

time of publication. The memo is set to take effect across all agencies by Dec. 31, 2025 at the

latest, although the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Department of Energy, and NASA,

among other agencies, have already implemented a version of the policy.

The Nelson Memo follows a similar policy released in 2013. The 2013 policy, however, applied only to federal agencies with over \$100 million in annual research and development spending, and allowed a 12-month embargo for papers being made publicly available after initial publication. The 12-month embargo maintained journals' ability to rely on subscription revenue from those seeking immediate access to papers.

Making research publicly available immediately upon publication, as is required by the Nelson Memo, can be costly for researchers, as many journals charge substantial fees to offset lost subscription revenue when papers are made public-access. The fees for Nature, for example, can be upwards of \$12,690 per paper, while Science Advances charges authors a fee of \$5,450 per paper...

Full story at <https://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2025/12/princeton-news-research-public-access-federal-funding-nelson-memo-unaffected>.



Straws in the Wind - Part 213



From the [Texas Tribune](#): *Texas A&M University will not reinstate a lecturer who was fired in the fall after a video of her teaching about gender identity in a children's literature class went viral, despite a faculty appeals panel unanimously concluding that her dismissal was not justified. The New York Times first reported Wednesday that interim Texas A&M president Tommy Williams deferred the decision to the university system, and that James Hallmark, the system's vice chancellor for academic affairs, wrote in a Dec. 19 memo that Melissa McCoul's termination in September was supported by "good cause." He did not explain his reasoning. McCoul's*

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attorney, Amanda Reichek, confirmed to *The Texas Tribune* that this sequence of events occurred.

...McCoul was fired in September after a student over the summer secretly recorded a classroom exchange in which the student disagreed with McCoul about whether it was legal to teach that there are more than two genders. The student then met with — and also secretly recorded — then-university president Mark Welsh III, who initially refused to fire McCoul. State Rep. Brian Harrison, R-Midlothian, posted the videos on X weeks after they were made.

...The controversy at Texas A&M, along with new laws expanding the power of governor-appointed regents over curriculum, hiring and discipline and expression on campuses, sparked changes across Texas higher education, with university systems launching course audits and adopting new restrictions on how race, gender and sexuality are taught.

Full story at <https://www.texastribune.org/2025/12/24/texas-am-system-fired-lecturer/>.

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From *Inside Higher Ed*: With just over two weeks left in office, Republican Virginia attorney general Jason Miyares agreed with the federal Justice Department that a 2020 law granting in-state tuition to undocumented students is unconstitutional. In a joint court filing, Miyares and lawyers for the Justice Department asked a federal judge to declare the Virginia Dream Act invalid and bar state authorities from enforcing it. If approved, the joint consent decree order would make Virginia the fourth state to scrap its policies that allow eligible undocumented students to pay the lower in-state tuition rate. The joint agreement came just one day after the Trump administration sued Virginia over its in-state tuition policies—the seventh such lawsuit...

Miyares, who lost his re-election bid to Democrat Jay Jones in November, wrote on social media that it's clear that the 2020 statute "is preempted by federal law." ...

Trump lawyers argued in the Virginia lawsuit and elsewhere that such policies discriminate against U.S. citizens because out-of-state students aren't eligible for in-state tuition. In Virginia, undocumented students can qualify for the reduced rate if they graduated from a state high school and if they or their parents filed Virginia income tax returns for at least two years before they enroll at a postsecondary institution. Jones, the incoming Democratic attorney general, criticized the administration's lawsuit as "an attack on our students and a deliberate attempt to beat the clock to prevent a new administration from defending them." He added that his team is reviewing their legal options...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/state-policy/2026/01/02/virginia-agrees-scrap-state-tuition-undocumented-students>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments: 

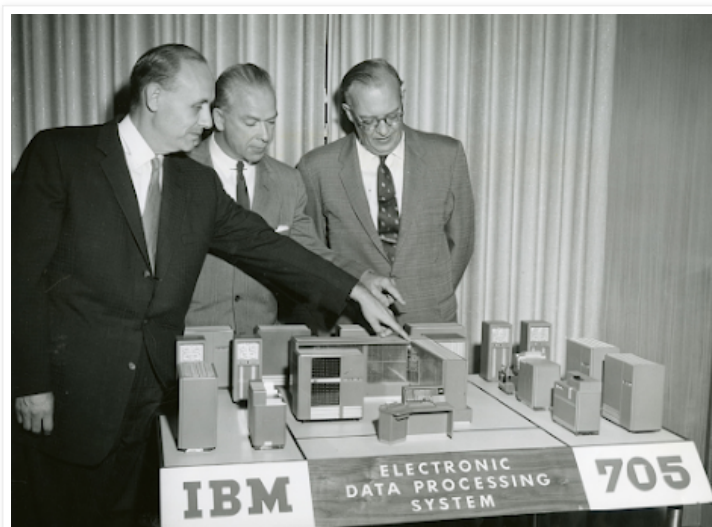
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- [UCLA Faculty Association](#)

Computer Ready



Dr. Cuthbert C. Hurd, director of data processing machines for IBM, Dean Neil Jacoby of the UCLA Graduate School of Business Administration, and UCLA Chancellor Raymond B. Allen

looking at a model of the IBM 705 computer for the Western Data Processing Center, established at UCLA in 1956.

Source: <https://picturingucla.library.ucla.edu/photos/ark:/21198/z1fc1c6b>.



Interior of the Center is shown above.

Source: <https://picturingucla.library.ucla.edu/photos/ark:/21198/z1p90nfw>.



Exterior of the Center is shown above. The building became part of the new Graduate School of Business Administration building (now the Luskin School).

Photo Caption: *The \$5,000,000 Western Data Processing Center was dedicated today at the University of California at Los Angeles as the world's first university computer center specializing in complicated business management problems. Forty-five western colleges and universities are using the Center, whose heart is the 709, most powerful commercial electronic computer manufactured by IBM. Use of the computer is being given to UCLA without charge by IBM. Participation in the dedication ceremonies were Thomas J. Watson, Jr., president of IBM, and Donald H. McLaughlin, chairman of the University of California Board of Regents. The Center building, whose eastern entrance is shown, will be connected with the University's planned Graduate School of Business Administration.*

Source: <https://picturingucla.library.ucla.edu/photos/ark:/21198/z11p495k>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments: 

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